wide variation in the prices of petrol and diesel in inland town compared to coastal areas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) In a free market scenario, the price of petrol and diesel would vary between coastal and inland locations. With a view to facilitate a smooth transition from the APM (Administered Pricing Mechanism) era to a free market scenario, the public sector of companies are presently equalizing the freight cost upto depots in the price build up of petrol and diesel.

New oil platforms in Mumbai

1452. DR. N.R. DASARI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ONGC has a plant to instal about 14 new well head platforms in Mumbai as a part of its massive programme of development of oil fields;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that ONGC used to place orders on Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. (HSL), Visakhapatnam and it has delivered 11 wellhead platforms earlier to ONGC but no new orders were placed on HSL since 1989;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether Government will prevail upon the ONGC to place orders on HSL for a few platforms on nomination basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) As part of its approve OIR schemes, 20 new well head platforms have been planned by Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) to be installed in Mumbai Offshore comprising Heera, South Heera, Mumbai High North and Mumbai High South fields, from the year 2002 till 2006;

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. A total of 11 plotforms were delivered to ONGC by Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL). In the recent years, HSL has not undertaken any project construct in work for ONGC in Mumbai Offshore. Though HSL has partcipated in various tenders of ONGC but either its bid was not qualified techno-commercially or its offered price was not competitive.

(e) ONGC is a Navratna company and has been among others delegated requisite financial powers to take decisions, keeping in view its commercial interests.

Self-sufficiency in crude production

1453. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India is looking at becoming self-sufficient in production of crude;

(b) if so, whether domestic crude oil production rose to 1.9 per cent in April, 2002 as compared to targeted figure for the month;

(c) whether the production was also 10.1 per cent higher than production of corresponding period last year;

(d) if so, what are the main reasons for increase of crude production and to what extent this increase will make India self-sufficient in the crude oil production; and

(e) what efforts are being made to improve its production further?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (e) Given the increasing demand for the petroleum products and the current level of import dependence of around 70%, it is difficult to envisage self-sufficiency in the near future. However, several important steps have been taken to increase oil and gas production, which include the following:—

(i) To improve the recovery factor from existing major fields by implementing Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes, in particular Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) has taken up 15 fields for this purpose at an estimated investment of about Rs. 10,000 crore, which would also help in accelerating oil production from these fields.